

the chronicle

It all stacks up
as WaiLo helps
brighten lives

– see page 2



Back to the sixties
for Christmas
at the museum

– see page 5



Just champion as
golf club stages
presentation night

– see page 32



DESPERATE PLEA FROM HARRIERS

Pupils' fundraising is spot-on



Day of the dalmatians: Can you spot the difference between the Franche pupils?

Opportunity to air views

RESIDENTS are being asked for their views on the future regeneration area next to the Horsefair in Kidderminster.

The Churchfields area of town has already been highlighted through the ReWyre Initiative and Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus as an area for potential change.

On Friday and Saturday a drop-in consultation event will be held at the shop at 55 Blackwell Street from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Studio – Page 6

CHARITABLE Kidderminster youngsters showed their support for Children in Need with a host of fun activities.

Pupils at Burlish Park Primary and Franche Community Primary got in on the fundraising act last week, raising nearly £500 between them.

Year 5 children from Burlish have been teasing the success of their appeal, which raised £162.66 through a toast sale.

Youngsters were spots and eco schools coordinator Lynda Williams said everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day.

Franche Community Primary pupils also took up the spot theme, dressing as Dalmatians, playing musical spot and making spotty biscuits and pizzas.

Other activities included selling spotty cakes and gingerbread Pudseys, while 10-year-old Katie Collingridge boosted funds by busking with her guitar at breaktimes.

Val Weddell-Hall, headteacher at Franche, said: "It's lovely that the children have entered into the spirit of Children in Need in order to raise money for those less fortunate than themselves."



Toast's up for Emma Voysey

CASH-STRAPPED Kidderminster Harriers are still looking for thousands of pounds of investment following meetings with fans and business leaders to drum up funds.

The Harriers have turned to supporters asking them to help bring the club back into the black as it faces a £160,000 shortfall by the end of the season if extra money is not found.

Several local businesses have pledged money to the club and one business boss has offered free cleaning fluids until the end of the season.

More than 150 fans attended a forum held at Aggborough on November 8 and at a stadium business lunch on November 12, members of the club's newly-appointed board welcomed questions and ideas from the locals.

Fans were given the opportunity to discover what went wrong during the old regime and find out where the new regime, headed by Dave Reynolds, is going to take them.

Facing questions were Dave Reynolds (chairman), Mark Serrell

By Chris Feehan

chris.feehan@expressandstar.co.uk

(director), Steve Burr (manager), Colin Youngjohns (president) and Brendan Phillips, the former manager of Nuneaton, who has been appointed by the club to find investors.

Matt Wall, spokesman for the Harriers, said: "Around 150 fans attended the fans' forum and we split the meeting into two halves.

"The first half was all about bringing people up to date with the current situation the club has found itself in. The second half was a chance to discuss how the board intends to take the club forward.

"It was good for the

club to have a collection of business-minded people here to exchange ideas. The business lunch was not just about money, it was about running the club and how to find a way forward."

Councillor Fran Oborski pledged £1,000 to the club following the plea for cash. She said: "I'm a bit of a fan, one of those supporters who doesn't go that often."

"I've known Dave (Reynolds) for a long time and when I saw it was Dave back in charge I felt inspired to make a donation."

"They were asking businesses to give £5,000. I couldn't afford that, but I could afford £1,000."

"I've had a lot out of Kidderminster so I feel all supporters should make a donation, regardless of the amount. If we look back historically we see that when the club is thriving the town thrives."

Pledged

"In a recession people need something to cheer them up. It would be a tragedy if the club went under."

Former Harriers director Steve Hodge pledged to supply cleaning fluids free of charge, which could save the club around £3,000 a year.

The managing director of Chem-Kal said: "They are the club I always look for. I'm not able to support the club with cash but can support them with my product."



Amy Phillips, Mayor Jeff Baker, Amy Hartin and Reece Utting switch on the lights

Lights switch-on the biggest and brightest so far

THOUSANDS of people turned out to see Kidderminster light up for the festive season in its most successful Christmas switch-on to date.

Despite funding issues earlier in the year the annual event has been branded by Kidderminster town centre manager as "their best yet", writes Sarah Hazelwood.

The event was put under threat by lack of donations due to the recession.

But crowds lined Vicar Street on Saturday and packed out the High Street to see Mayor Jeff Baker, who was joined by Kidderminster Carnival Queen, Amy Phillips, and Christmas competition winners Amy Hartin, aged six, and Reece Utting, nine, for the switch-on at 6pm.

Kidderminster town centre manager Jacky Roberts said: "This has been the most successful year we have ever had. Although we did encounter some funding issues the amount of support that we have received through free acts and prize donations from local shops and groups has really boosted this year's event."

Believing

Performances from a variety of local groups provided a host of entertainment in and around the town hall and Swan Shopping Centre.

The evening was headed by Kidderminster vocalist and Don't Stop Believing group member Laura Broad. Other guests included Bewdley school rock band, Pelican Riot and Kidderminster Girl Guides.

Splinters Dance School joined the proceedings, performing the opening routine from Aladdin and his Amazing Magical Lamp which will be on stage at the Rose Theatre from January 3.

Christmas carols led by St George's choir and Super Troupers Performing Arts School children's choir filled the streets with festive cheer.



Lights in Vicar Street. Pictures: Colin Hill

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Raiders snatch £25,000 haul at house



The distinctive Chanel bag

RAIDERS snatched a £25,000 haul including a Versace dish when they burgled a home in Kidderminster.

Other items taken included a distinctive Chanel shopping bag, an Aynsley bowl and jewellery.

Police are appealing for information following the raid at a property off Oldnall Road in the Aggborough area, which happened between Friday, November 12 and around midday on Monday.

Thieves broke in and made an untidy search before taking a large amount of boxed jewellery, predominantly gold, along with other items including the china.

A black and white cloth shopping bag, with the Chanel logo in gold, was one of two identical bags at the house of which only one was stolen. It measures approximately 2ft by 2ft and may have been used to carry away some of the other items such as the black and red Versace dish and a fruit design Aynsley china bowl which was one of a pair.

The haul also included Coalport china and gold hunter watches.

Detective Constable Debbie Cleary, of Kidderminster CID, said: "We are appealing for information from anyone who may have seen any suspicious activity, or vehicles." Call her on 0300 333 3000, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Aynsley china, left, and a Versace dish, right, were stolen



Lions roaring into action beside Santa

LOCAL LIONS are roaring into action this December with Santa ho-ho-hoing to bring some charitable Christmas cheer.

The Kidderminster and District Lions Club will be touring the local area collecting money for charity, alongside Santa Claus and his giant float.

All money raised during the tour will go towards helping people in need through the Lions charities.

Santa's float has been in operation for around 15 years, and the Lions' Santa tour itself is now in its 34th year, writes

Chris Feehan.

Lions president Ron Cross said: "We raised £5,500 last year but we are hoping for a bit more this year. We would like everyone out of their houses supporting our cause whenever they hear us coming."

Two local firms are loaning equipment to make the tour possible. Mudie-Bond is giving the use of a lorry to transport the float and Hire It is supplying a generator for the fairy lights.

Tours begin on Saturday, December 4 in Bewdley town centre.

Kidderminster: December 9, Hoobrook (7-9pm); 10, Landoak and Greenhill (7-9pm); 11, Husum Bridge, Weavers Wharf (8am-4.30pm).

Stourport: December 12, Longboat Lane (4-6pm), Windermere Way (6-8pm); 13, Bewdley Road (7-9pm); 14, Lickhill Road North (7-9pm).

Kidderminster: December 15, Ferndale (7-9pm); 16, Forest Gate (7-9pm); 17, Sutton Park (7-9pm); 18, Husum Bridge, Weavers Wharf (8am-4.30pm).

Stourport: December 19, Walshes (4-6pm), Areley Kings (6-8pm).

Kidderminster: December 20, Maripool (7-9pm); 21, Offmore Farm (7-9pm); 22, Hasbury (7-9pm).

Race is on for Wailers

HARTLEBURY residents are climbing into the saddle to fight a proposed incinerator.

The Worcestershire Residents against Incineration and Landfill (Wail) group is holding a race night tomorrow (November 26) at Hartlebury Royal British Legion, Millridge Way.

Sponsors will be presented at 7.30pm before the races start at 8pm.

To make a donation contact treasurer Nigel Dowty on 01299 250974 or for more information visit www.wail.uk.net

Walk with stop for mince pies

VILLAGERS in Rock will be stepping out on a special Christmas walk next month.

Rock Pathfinders' free guided walk on Sunday, December 12 will include a stop for mulled wine and mince pies.

The walk starts at 10am from The Bell pub at Pensax and ends at about 12.30pm.

More details on the group at www.rockvillagehall.co.uk or ring 01299 832840.

WaiLo's boxing clever on 175 Christmas gifts

Cabinet online

TODAY'S Worcester-shire County Council cabinet meeting will be transmitted live online.

The November 25 cabinet was meeting at 10am in the council chamber at County Hall to discuss the economy and other issues.

Those with internet access can follow via their computer. The webcasts stay online to be viewed at a later date. Visit website <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/syst-em-pages/webcasts>

A FORMER Stourport High School student has helped to collect and make 175 Christmas shoeboxes for the world's largest children's Christmas project.

Operation Christmas Child (OCC), run by the Christian charity Samaritan's Purse, has brought smiles to more than 80 million children worldwide since its shoebox appeal began 20 years ago.

Last year 1.5 million shoeboxes full of gifts were packed by groups, schools and churches from across the UK and Ireland and sent to orphans and children aged two to 14, living in poverty overseas.

Communications executive WaiLo Li, aged 26, a Communications Executive, has made more than 100 shoeboxes herself.

She has also organised collections from Birmingham Chinese Evangelical Church and Birmingham Chinese Christian Church, with the help of

Project TOM volunteers, comprising young people aged 15 to 26.

The former student of Worcester Sixth Form College and founder of Project TOM said: "The aim behind Project TOM was to encourage more young people into charity work."

"Operation Christmas Child is a fantastic international project," she added. "It's a lovely thought that the next time these shoeboxes are opened, it will be by a child in poverty. Hopefully it will bring a smile to their faces."

Crayons

"Everyone is having a tough time at the moment but buying these gifts have really put things into perspective. Most of these shoeboxes contain basic items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, flannels, crayons, colouring and exercise books."

It's the final call this week to drop off completed Christmas shoeboxes at the Kidderminster processing centre, 8 Lisle Avenue, DY11 7DL. It is open until the end of November from 10am-8.30pm.



Stacking up! WaiLo Li with just some of the shoeboxes she has put together

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Business booming, despite tough times

EMPLOYMENT specialist Pertemps is celebrating helping to set up more than 60 Wyre Forest businesses in six months.

Despite the economic climate Pertemps People Development Group (PPDG), at Church Street, has assisted in creating 61 new businesses between May and October.

Local residents who have become their own boss include photographers, vermin control specialists, printers, caterers, tilers and other tradesmen.

Pertemps uses government initiatives to help with business plans, marketing support, tools and equipment along with an aftercare service.

Burning off that excess energy

AN ACTIVITY centre in Kidderminster is getting in the festive spirit and opening its doors for four days just before Christmas.

The Pioneer Centre normally opens only to groups but from December 20-23 anyone is welcome.

Archery, fencing, caving and abseiling are among the activities provided at the Cleobury Mortimer centre, aimed at eight to 12-year-olds.

All sessions will be taken by qualified trainers and one, two, three or four-day packages are available, costing £15 per child for a single day to £40 for all four.

Steve Robertshaw, business development manager at the Pioneer centre, said: "This is a brilliant, safe and extremely fun way for kids to work off some of their excess energy."

Days run from 8.30am-3.30pm. Warm and waterproof clothing will be needed.

Deadline for bookings is December 10. Call 01299 271217 or visit www.actioncentres.co.uk

Register success

WYRE FOREST residents looking to make home improvements are being encouraged to log on to the Trader Register database.

The scheme, run by Worcestershire's Regulatory Services, has received national recognition.

The free online directory of local businesses is at the website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/traderregister.

It has been accepted as a member of the Local Authority Assured Trader Scheme. It lists 370 members offering a range of services.

In particular, the team has been able to use European Social Funds to pay for tools, equipment, training and travel expenses in the early phases of new ventures.

Among the start-ups is The Mary Knoll Holistic Salon, a new business run by Meriel Acton.

"They gave me my confidence back," she said of Pertemps. "Everything happened so quickly for me, I've been particularly grateful for the ongoing support provided on a weekly basis."

Balance

Self-employment also offers flexible hours which allow photographer Sam Thompson to balance her time between work and her young family.

"I get quality time with my children as well as doing something I really enjoy," she said.

Pertemps regional operations director Simon Smithson said of Kidderminster team Lis Cox and Dave Schofield: "As a result of their efforts a diverse array of new companies have been created, all within the Kidderminster area."

To learn more, call 01562 505000.



They mean business: New businessmen and women on the steps of Kidderminster Town Hall. Front, from left, Dave White (Snap & Print), Dave Schofield (PPDG), Sam Thompson (Sam's Studio Photography). Middle, Freddie Taquin (The Old Bakery F&J catering), Gary Tuffy (Classic Wrought Iron Designs), Jill Marson (The Old Bakery, F & J catering). Back, Richard Greenhill (Greenhill Plastering and Tiling), Paul Parsons (Wolverley Pest Control, natural methods) and Meriel Acton (Mary Knoll Holistic Salon)

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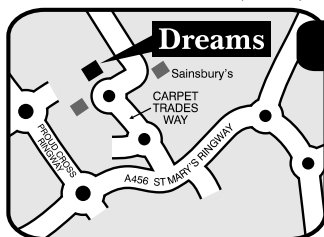
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Sixties Christmas at museum



Museum volunteer Anna May Furness, aged 15, of Abberley, helps to dress the 1960s sitting room

FESTIVE weekends with a twist are being staged at Hartlebury Castle.

The County Museum will be getting into the spirit next month by holding Christmas weekends – with a sixties feel.

On December 4-5 and 11-12 Santa will hold court in a 1960s themed and traditionally decorated sitting room with gifts for all good girls and boys.

There are lots of activities to keep children and adults entertained. The little ones can have their faces painted, watch a festive puppet show and take part in craft activities, including writing a letter to Santa!

Adults can browse the gifts and craft stalls, purchase seasonal gifts and stocking fillers from the museum shop and enjoy the changing entertainment from local choirs, school, musical groups and theatre troupes in the Georgian Salon.

The Castle Kitchen Café will be offering homemade meals and snacks, including mulled wine and mince pies.

Visitor services officer Rachel Robinson said: "The County Museum offers the perfect atmosphere for some festive fun with a sixties twist. Christmas weekends are a great way to have a full day out."

More details from 01299 250416.

Take the stage on new boards

VILLAGERS near Bewdley are treading the boards on a new stage, thanks to the Co-op.

A donation of £2,000 from The Co-operative's Community Fund has helped the installation of the new stage at Heightington Village Hall, Bewdley.

The cash, added to Lottery funding, enabled the village hall committee to buy the stage and upgrade all seating.

Richard Coen, from the committee, said: "Being able to install a stage in the hall has been a great boost for the community and really opens the scope for more activities and productions to be held at the venue."

"We're extremely grateful for this grant from The Co-operative as revenue gained from

additional usage of the hall will help to sustain its future."

Andrew North, Co-op regional secretary, said: "The Community Fund can make a real and lasting contribution to local communities. Many community groups share the same values as The Co-operative and could benefit from an award – and we would certainly welcome their applications."

The fund offers grants of between £100 and £2,000 to community projects. Local Co-operative members' committees allocate awards.

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the chronicle

Updates at Pact on night antics

ACTION taken to address drink and drug-related anti-social behaviour in Bewdley town centre will be reported to the next meeting of the town's Pact (Partners And Communities Together).

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 30 at the Baptist Church in High Street (6.30pm).

Panel representatives will give updates on progress made on issues raised as priorities for action at the last meeting in September.

These concerned anti-social behaviour relating to the town's night-time economy, particularly on Friday and Saturday evenings; speeding on local roads including Dowles Road and Cleobury Road in Bewdley, the A456 at Callow Hill and the A4117 at Far Forest and problems associated with scrap metal collections in the area.

Local Policing Sergeant Chris Aimes said: "The meeting will be an opportunity for people to hear about what we have been doing to address their concerns and to raise any new issues."

More information about the Pact process and meetings is available via the Local Policing link on the West Mercia Police website www.westmercia.police.uk

Weaving the magic of willow

BUDDING sculptors can learn how to grow their own material.

Bishops Wood outdoor education centre at Crossway Green, Stourport is staging a willow planting and maintenance workshop.

Those on the three-hour course will learn how to grow quality willow rods which can be used to create sculpture and structures.

The course is on Saturday (November 27) from 10am-1pm.

The centre, operated by the Worcestershire Outdoor and Environmental Service, is normally open only to schools, colleges and groups.

But recently it has started to offer a number of leisure courses and workshops based on traditional skills and crafts that offer solutions for sustainable development.

Workshop places are limited and cost £30 per person.

For more information call centre co-ordinator Gill Frankling on 01299 250 513 or email bishopwoodcentre@worcestershire.gov.uk



July – a page from a 19th century fashion album compiled by Charlotte Davies

Back in time for date with future

STAFF at Worcestershire County Council's Record Office have been delving into the archives to produce a calendar for 2011.

Members of staff from the Record office have picked out their favourite images from those held in the strong rooms at the County Hall and Trinity Street branches.

They have been reproduced in full colour to really do them justice.

Among the images included in the calendar is a map of Worcestershire dating back to 1577, pages from a 19th Century fashion album and a very early photo of a horse drawn tram.

Jean North, Worcestershire County Council archivist, said: "It was a tough decision to select the 12 images as we all had ones we wanted to include from the many historic documents we work with here."

"The calendar would make a wonderful present for anyone with an interest in the county's heritage and we hope it will create a lovely impression on people's walls."

The calendar is available for



January - Map of Worcestershire by Christopher sexton, 1577

£5.99 from Worcestershire Record Office's two public branches, the Worcestershire History Centre on Trinity Street, Worcester or the County Hall branch as well as the Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury and Worcester Tourist

information Centre. Calendars can also be ordered from www.worcestershire.gov.uk/records

The Records Office produced its first calendar using archived images for this year and it proved a big success.



May – Horse drawn tram in St John's, 1889

Churchfields plan, Made in studio

A TEMPORARY design studio has been set up as part of regeneration plans for the Churchfields area of Kidderminster.

The Birmingham-based team Made, which works to improve design quality, has recruited architecture graduates who have not yet found permanent jobs.

The studio provides support for local authorities.

The graduates are paid a modest daily rate and gain valuable

work experience. Ben Pipkin, Nimesh Mistry and Kerry-Ann O'Neill have begun to make a three-dimensional model of the area to be used to test ideas and for community engagement.

A time-lapse film of their work can be watched at http://www.made.org.uk/news/view/new_graduate_design_studio_launched_for_kidderminster/

Made is working with Wyre Forest Council to develop the masterplan for the neighbour-

hood. Churchfields, a mixed area of industrial premises, housing and derelict spaces is to become an urban village with support from the Homes and Communities Agency.

Flexible

Made is providing know-how from panel members Bob Ghosh of 4Architects and Phil Jones of Phil Jones Associates.

They provide a flexible way for the council to find extra planning capacity they need.

Made says the masterplan-

ning of Churchfields will present a number of challenges, particularly overcoming the barrier effect of the Kidderminster ring-road, adapting local roads which were originally specified for heavy lorries and linking to adjoining neighbourhoods.

But the charity feels there are opportunities to make the most of the canal-side setting and design a mixed use community with a sustainable mix of homes, workplaces, retail and leisure facilities.

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- Live cookery demo with TV chef Martin Blunos (11:30am)
- Beacon FM breakfast crew in store
- Children's fun and entertainment
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Richard Randall



Chef Martin Blunos



Paul Martin

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- Free prize draw

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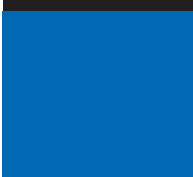
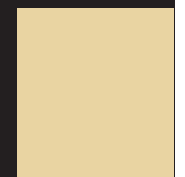
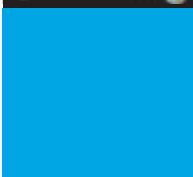
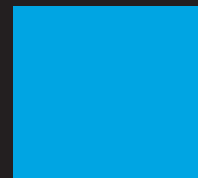
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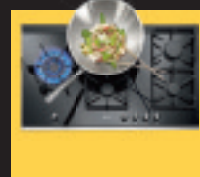
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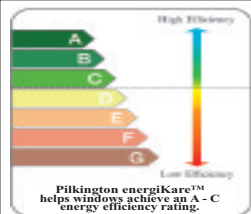
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Pass that Christmas list to Santa over breakfast table

HERE'S an invitation you don't see that often - breakfast with Santa!

Father Christmas is taking time out from his busy season to meet families at Gourmet Cooks in the Swan Shopping Centre, Kidderminster on Sunday, December 19.

He will be there from 9.30am and young visitors can meet him, pass on Christmas lists and enjoy a healthy breakfast.

Centre manager Ros Darby said: "We are really excited about Santa visiting the centre. It's a real treat for the children to meet him in person and

what better way to start the day than a healthy breakfast before grabbing those last-minute gifts?"

Tickets are £6 per child and for under-sevens only. To book, visit the management suite at the main escalator. Places are limited.

Also at the Swan, visitors can remember loved ones by dedicating a light on the Tree of Remembrance and take part in the Light up a Life service of remembrance on December 12 at 4pm with carol singing and readings. All funds raised will support the Kemp Hospice in Kidderminster.

Police facing a new wave of robberies

POLICE are facing a wave of cash in transit robberies in north Worcestershire.

There have been eight this year across Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin after none at all in 2009.

Security vehicles either collecting or delivering cash are often increasingly targeted in the weeks before Christmas and New Year.

Quiz kings are put to the test again



Winners and losers, from left, Sean McGahern of The Royal Forester, Melanie Annis with her wooden spoon for losing team last time and Vernon Owen of the winning side

Deterrent

West Mercia Police is running a campaign called Follow That Van where officers offer protection to security vehicles carrying cash across West Mercia. They follow in patrol cars to act as a deterrent and help ensure safe deliveries.

Detective Inspector Tim Bower, of the Force Intelligence Bureau, said: "Cash in transit robberies are rare in the West Mercia area and the force does all it can to keep it that way."

"However, we have had eight offences so far this year. We believe those responsible are criminals travelling into our area."

"We recently arrested six people from the Merseyside area in relation to a robbery that occurred in Herefordshire in September."

"We will also act on any intelligence we gather and this is where the public can help."

"We are appealing for the public to be vigilant because any information they pass on can help the police predict who is planning what and where and stay one step ahead of the criminals," he added.

BUDDING brainboxes have a chance to put themselves to the test with a quiz night next Monday.

The Parent Teacher Association of Far Forest Primary School is holding its next quiz night at The Royal Forester Inn at Callow Hill near Bewdley, starting at 7.45pm with teams (maximum four players) requested to arrive no later than 7.30pm.

Entry is £2.50 per head with all proceeds from the event, sponsored by The Royal Forester, donated to the school.

Further information from Far Forest School's PTA on 01299 266316 or The Royal Forester on 01299 266286.

Gritter Twitter on roads

WYRE FOREST residents can tackle impending cold weather with a Gritter Twitter.

Worcestershire County Council wants residents to stay up-to-date on what's happening to keep traffic on the county's roads moving safely as temperatures drop.

The authority's fleet of 31 gritters hit the roads for the first time this winter on November 14 when gauges dipped below freezing.

The Gritter Twitter was launched during last winter's prolonged cold weather, the busiest ever period for the county council's gritting teams.

Vehicles covered 56,000 miles - equivalent to more than twice around the world.

Those who sign up will get regular tweets with information on conditions and gritting plans. Just go to the website www.twitter.com/worcesc

Flower power as club prepares for its dinner

HARTLEBURY Gardening Club will be full of flower power at this year's social dinner.

It will take place at the Parish Hall tomorrow (November 26) from 7.30pm.

Wolverhampton comedian Doug Parker will perform after the meal courtesy of Val Hardwick.

Tickets are £12 and those attending are invited to take along their own glasses and drinks - and meet the flowery fancy dress code.

Spaces are limited so anyone interested in going should visit the village Post Office or call Pat on 01299 251362.

Charity going yellow

A CHARITY is out to turn the Wyre Forest yellow next year.

Marie Curie Cancer Care is appealing for help with its Great Daffodil Appeal to run next March. The event is the charity's biggest annual fundraising event when it asks people to wear daffodil badges to show support for Marie Curie Cancer Care.

The funds raised help Marie Curie Nurses care for people with terminal cancer and other illnesses in their own homes, giving people the choice to die at home surrounded by the people and things that they love.

Community fundraiser Richard Scott said: "We would be very grateful to hear from anyone who believes they could raise around £35 from having a daffodil box of daffodil pins at work, and collecting donations from staff and customers."

The charity also needs volunteers to help organise local collections.

Anyone interested in helping should call Mr Scott on 0117 942 7132, or send an email to richard.scott@mariecurie.org.uk

Talking care with MP Dunne



Residents at a care home in Aleye got the chance to discuss care issues with Ludlow MP Philip Dunne when he visited. Mr Dunne, left, was at White Lodge Residential Care Home, part of the Oldfield Residential Care Group, on Friday, November 12. He is pictured with resident John Embry, centre, and Oldfield owner Simon Badland.

thechronicle

Key help for the hospice

WYRE FOREST technology firm OGL Computer is getting down to business and helping a charity.

The firm, with bases in Kidderminster and Stourport, presented a business IT seminar at Villa Park.

The Optimise IT event attracted 87 delegates from businesses throughout the Midlands, and focused on technology subjects including disaster recovery, virtualisation, ecommerce and web marketing.

OGL made a donation to Birmingham St Mary's Hospice for every delegate, a total of £435.

The IT provider's 170 staff also gave a wide range of donated items, including toys and electrical goods, which the hospice sold at its Christmas bazaar at Birmingham Botanical Gardens on November 13.

The bazaar raised more than £5,000 for the hospice, which cares for more than 1,000 people and their families a year.

Yuletide gifts up for grabs

CHRISTMAS gifts will be up for grabs in Aleye Kings next month.

St Bartholomew's Church stages its Christmas market in the village hall on Saturday, December 4, starting at 11am.

Stalls will include bric a brac, toys and books, crafts, produce, cakes and tombles as well as Christmas goodies, novelties and cards.

Refreshments will be available and admission is free.

Spotlight falls on Motown icon

THE life and times of Motown icon Diana Ross are detailed in a new book written by a Kidderminster-born author.

Ian Phillips, aged 31, has penned Diana Queen of Motown which delves into her career highs and lows. Reviews all her 67 albums, with a track by track guide, feature in the book. Mr Phillips said many books have

been released about her personal life but few pay homage to her music career.

"She has generated so much negative publicity and this so-called diva reputation that she has attracted has often tended to overshadow her musical output," he said. "Miss Ross has often said in interviews that she wishes people would focus more on her

music than her private life and it was those words that fuelled my ambition to write a book dedicated to her music, live performances, her films."

Mr Phillips, a former pupil at King Charles High School, in Comberton Road, Kidderminster, but now lives in the North West.

To buy the book, visit www.bankhousebooks.com

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Common to heath

CONSERVATION is the theme of the next talk to Hartlebury Common Local Group.

Godfrey Jones, secretary of Pound Green Common conservationists, will speak about the site on Monday, December 6 at Stourport Boat Club (8pm).

Mr Jones will give the history of a project, funded by Natural England and the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, to restore common land to lowland heath habitat over the past 10 years.

Admission is £3. More details from Dr Joy M Rooney on 01299 877275 or at www.hartleburycommonlocalgroup.org.uk

Natalie is back at the pharmacy

FORMER Midcounties Co-op pharmacy manager Natalie Wood is back in her old post at Kidderminster.

She joined the Linden Avenue branch in 2000 but left to train as a doctor and work in Nottingham. She returns after missing community pharmacy life.

High school on the airwaves



Radio days: From left, Al Booth, JK and LJM staff Jayne Greene and Isabel Clarke

PUPILS at Stourport High School hit the airwaves at a radio workshop.

The workshop was organised by Bewdley-based LJM Media which specialises in event and media management.

Deputy head teacher Mike Humphreys said: "The students loved it, they were so engaged all day and all improved their confidence at speaking aloud and writing accurately under pressure. We are planning to make

this a regular feature."

In total 105 pupils aged 11-15 took part – the first time LJM had dealt with a mixed age workshop.

It was organised by technology teacher James Budgen, who said: "We jumped at the chance to run the workshop because it relates to our new school radio project that we have recently set up."

"The day went really well from both LJM and our perspective. It was the first time we had ever done anything like this."

Plans for hall to go on show

BEWDLEY people will have the chance to see plans for the re-development of the town's St George's Hall.

And they will have the opportunity of input on the internal designs. A public consultation is being held in Bewdley Library on Friday, December 3 (2-6pm) and the following day (10-4pm).

Peter Miller, of Bewdley Development Trust, said: "We

would like people to come along and see the plans and chat to the people who will be involved in this wonderful opportunity to have a new major multi-use community facility within our town.

"The plans include replacing the 1960s extension with a new building and major renovation of the hall to improve its use for large events. The re-developed hall will also include a number

of areas for hire to community groups as well as a new cafe/bar," he added.

The project is being undertaken by a partnership of St George's Hall Trustees, Bewdley Development Trust and Bewdley Festival. An application for funding on the £1.3million project has been sent to Advantage West Midlands and Communitybuilders. A grant of £69,000 has

already been received from Communitybuilders to move the scheme to the planning approval stage. The aim is to have planning permission early next year with the hall fully open early in 2012.

Refurbishment of the 19th century building is the first phase of a proposed £10m redevelopment of the Load Street Area which includes a new library and medical centre.

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thechronicle

Pow! Club cash for children

CASH is now available for children and young people in the county to try a new activity or join a club.

Children and young people could qualify for Positive Opportunities Worcestershire (POW) money - a government project to help them try new activities that will help them at school and in life.

This funding is for children and young people whose families may find it difficult to pay for activities or who are in care.

All children who currently claim

free school meals will qualify for POW money. It can be spent on activities offered at school or other places, such as leisure centres or clubs. It can also pay fees for the Scouting movement and many other organisations, such as a local football team or music group.

Rachel Denton, Worcestershire County Council's extended services cluster manager, said: "Children who accessed POW over the last few months have told us it is a great opportunity to do something new. Worcestershire children and

young people have accessed a wide range of activities from street dancing to theatre trips.

"POW is a fantastic opportunity for children and young people to participate in activities they have previously been unable to."

Parents who want to find out if their child can get POW money will need to speak to the relevant school.

More information from www.worcestershire.gov.uk/pow or the Family Information Service on 01905 790560.

Metal thefts now on the rise in town

KIDDERMINSTER is suffering a surge in thefts of lead and other metals.

Lead flashing worth £1,000 was stolen from the Northumberland House medical centre on Stourport Road between Friday, November 12 and Thursday, November 18.

A window grill worth £50 was taken from the Forest Dog Rescue shop in Oxford Street, Kidderminster, between Thursday, November 11 and November 18. And offenders were disturbed stealing lead flashing from bungalow roofs in Witley Close on the Rifle Range estate at 5am on Thursday, November 18.

Lead flashing had already been taken from three bungalows in the area overnight between Thursday, November 11 and the following day.

Several residents reported afterwards that they had heard banging noises between 2am and 3.30am on Friday but did not see anyone.

Police are increasing patrols and asked Wyre Forest Community Housing to step up its warden patrols.

Neighbourhood Watch has also been alerted.

Vigilant

Pete Aston, crime risk advisor for the Wyre Forest, urged people to be vigilant and asked anyone who saw or heard anything suspicious, such as ladders being carried or noise from roofs at night, to contact police immediately.

He said: "Even if someone looks like a workman and is dressed in a high visibility jacket, police would much rather check a person is genuine than have a metal theft reported."

"We would urge anyone who thinks they saw anyone acting suspiciously in the area and in particular any unusual vehicles parked nearby to contact us immediately on 0300 333 3000."

Thieves take baby rabbits

CALLOUS thieves stole two baby rabbits from a hutch in Kidderminster.

The animals were taken from the rear garden of a house in Marpool Place, Kidderminster, between 6pm on Thursday, November 11 and 11am next day.

The black and white lop eared dwarf rabbits were 10 weeks old. One was big and the other small with black markings around its eyes.

Anyone with information should call police on 0300 333 3000.

Year Six pupils from Franche Community Primary School dressed up in clothes from the 1950s, 60s and 70s and took part in a range of activities.

They incorporated the new Time Warp topic into IT, religious education, numeracy and literacy, writing commentaries on the 1996 World Cup using clips from the internet.

Children also studied The Beatles, looked at peace movements and

Post-haste for Scouts

KIDDERMINSTER Scouts will again deliver Christmas cards to addresses in the town as well as Wolverley, Cookley and Blakedown for 15p.

Stamps are available from today (November 25) to December 17 at shops including Beards, Chapman & Myers, Cost Cutter Franche & Lister Road, General Store, Birchen Coppice, RAFA Club, Kidderminster Health Centre, Spennells Pharmacy and Tangles Hairdressers - Heronswood Road.

Deliveries will be made from December 18.

Time warp for school pupils



Time warp time for, top from left, Jordan Bell and Tomeka Perks, and, front, Ellie Mae Fereday and Nathan Pepperall

YOUNGSTERS in Kidderminster went back in time to discover the fashions of yesterday as part of a new topic.

Year Six pupils from Franche Community Primary School dressed up in clothes from the 1950s, 60s and 70s and took part in a range of activities.

They incorporated the new Time Warp topic into IT, religious education, numeracy and literacy, writing commentaries on the 1996 World Cup using clips from the internet.

Children also studied The Beatles, looked at peace movements and

created Andy Warhol-style pop art. Val Weddell-Hall, head teacher at Franche, said: "This is a fantastic and fun way to launch a topic."

"The children and their parents have made such an effort, some making their own outfits."

The project will run until Christmas and culminate in Time Warp TV, where children will create and act out activities from the three decades.

For further information contact Franche Community Primary School on 01562 751788 or visit the school website, www.franchepriamary.org.uk

Woman attacked on forecourt

A WOMAN was attacked on a petrol station forecourt in Kidderminster.

She was confronted by a man who knocked her over at the Texaco service station in Birmingham Road.

Police are appealing for witnesses after a woman was assaulted on a petrol station forecourt in Kidderminster.

She managed to get into the

petrol station and call the police while the man fled the scene. The woman suffered a cut to one cheek but did not require medical attention.

Police are appealing for witnesses to the assault, which happened at about 4.10pm on Monday (November 15). PC Russell Bunce said: "The woman was naturally very distressed afterwards and was consoled on the forecourt by

several people who were there at the time but did not leave their details. I would ask them to come forward."

A man was arrested two days later in connection with the incident and subsequently released on police bail until December 13.

Witnesses or anyone with information should call PC Bunce on 0300 333 3000 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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WAKE UP TO BREAKFAST WITH TOM CAMPBELL



107.2
The Wyre

TOP TEN PLAYLIST OF WEEK



Plenty of Silence for
Alexandra Burke

The Flood
Take That

Not the Drinking
Lauren Pritchard

Hold My Hand
Michael Jackson

Happiness
Jordan Alexis

Make You Feel
My Love
Adele

The Silence
Alexandra Burke

Rhythm of Love
Plain White T's

Firework
Katy Perry

Stay the Night
James Blunt

Poison
Nicole Scherzinger

I'm getting the needle over the Yuletide tree

IT SEEMS that lately I always start this column by fighting back at the notion that Christmas is coming...and who am I to stop that trend now?

There's been some minor disagreements in the Campbell household regarding our Christmas tree...namely Rosie wants me to put it up YESTERDAY, where I believe that we should put off filling the house (and the carpet) with pine until AT LEAST two weeks before the big day. Apparently I'm a bit of a Scrooge for putting my festive foot down on the matter...I may relent and get the darn thing up in a day or two on the proviso I can go for a Christmas "pint down the pub" (a new holiday tradition that I've just made up).

But on a slightly non-Christmassy note, there's something great happening for parents in north Worcestershire in the run up to the big day. If you have a child at primary school in the county you can meet up with other parents over a coffee and pick up tips on bedtime rou-

tines, good behaviour, dealing with bullying friends and dealing with bullying.

The Wyre Forest and Hagley Project Home School Link is something very special indeed, and parents rarely get things like this coming up. The group will be running free sessions across the area now until the end of November. To find out more, give them a bell on 01562 744657.

Once again, I'm running out of time and inches so will love you and leave you!

As always, I encourage you to stop by and check out the Tom Campbell Breakfast Show weekday mornings from 6am on 107.2 The Wyre. Myself and Nina have all the ingredients you need to get your working day started properly - some great music, some big chances to win and sometimes it's even quite funny (not guaranteed).

And before you ask...no, I haven't put the Wyre's Christmas tree up yet EITHER!

DANI WOZENCROFT FROM WYRE NEWS WITH THE LATEST ROADWORKS

Bringing travel updates to keep you moving...

Kidderminster

A456 Bewdley Road closed between Blakebrook to Proud Cross Ringway at night (from 6.30pm-6am) until tomorrow (November 26).

Speed restrictions of 10mph and 40mph between Lion Lane and Shatterford until tomorrow (November 26).

A4535 Sutton Road has temporary traffic lights opposite number 28 until tomorrow (November 26).

Stourport

Ryvere Close footpath to Dunley Walk closed from November 29-December 10.

Low Habberley

Habberley Lane is closed between Habberley Road in Kidderminster to Hoarstone Lane in Trimpley until today (November 25).

Ombersley

A449 Main Road has a speed limit of 40mph and contra flow in place between Sinton Lane to Haye Lane until April 3, 2011.

Hartlebury

A449 Waresley to Torton Road has a speed limit of 40mph and contra flowby the Old Worcester Road until April 1, 2011.

Churchill

Churchill Lane closed from Waggon Lane north until December 3.

Redditch

Unicorn Hill to Clive Road has temporary traffic lights until today (November 25).

West Midlands

Narrow lanes and speed restrictions of 50mph on the M5 between J3 and J4.

Join the team every weekday for updates. Tune into 107.2 The Wyre. You can be a Jambuster, call 64 1072.



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the pulse

Just champion!



Danny (David Clarke) and Dad (Robert Graham) get the point from Squire Hazell (Andy Barlow) and Rabetts (Alan Minaker)

Band with a Remedy is lined up to back Weller

Nav Sahota, Dave Smalls and Tom Callinswood reckon they have the Remedy to playing at the LG Arena



COUNTY band and 2009 winner of Worcester's Got Talent, Naked Remedy will be playing a support slot for Paul Weller tonight (November 25) at the LG Arena in Birmingham.

The band will play before and after the gig in the LG Arena's new entertainment zone, ForumLive where concert-goers enjoy food, drink and live music.

Psychedelic

Naked Remedy's blend of garage rock and psychedelic blues is winning the band fans across the region.

Lead singer Dave Small said: "This is a huge opportunity for us and we are all really excited to be supporting one of the giants of British music."

KIDDERMINSTER theatre group The Nonentities are offering Rose Theatre patrons bumper helpings of the feelgood factor this Christmas.

Master storyteller Roald Dahl's hit Danny the Champion of the World has been adapted by David Wood to provide a rumbustious, fast-paced, good-versus-evil, attraction for children of all ages.

Kerena Taylor of the Nonentities promises lots of opportunities for audience participation as brave Danny and his widower father, supported by most of the village and a flock of pheasants, take on the wicked Squire Hazell in a desperate attempt not to be evicted from their caravan.

"Don't miss this colourful and exciting production for a cheerful start for your festive season," she said.

The show opens at 7.30pm on Monday, December 6 and runs until the following Saturday when there will be a 2.30pm matinee, as well as the usual evening performance.

Call the box office on 01562 743745 or visit www.rosetheatre.co.uk



Justice is done to Jeff Wayne's War of the Worlds - page 18

YOUR EIGHT-PAGE ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE AND WEEK'S TV VIEWING



Rumer's 10-year struggle to be overnight success - page 23



Symphony Hall round-up - page 23

Wendy's School Of Dance

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Finally, War of Worlds has wow factor . . .

THE CREATOR of the War of the Worlds album, Jeff Wayne, is delighted that modern technology is allowing him to finally do justice to the show he first envisaged more than 30 years ago.

Based on the classic HG Wells novel about invaders from Mars, American songwriter Wayne's hit concept album from 1978, which featured the timeless hit Forever Autumn by former Moody Blues singer Justin Hayward, is touring the world and comes to Birmingham NIA next month.

The spectacular production on December 9 will feature a three-tonne 35ft tall Martian Fighting Machine, CGI animation from the

proposed movie version of the musical, plus Wayne himself conducting the 10-piece Black Smoke Band and 36-piece Ulladubulla Strings.

The star-studded cast will include Jason Donovan as the Artilleryman, The X-Factor's Rhydian as Pastor Nathaniel, the clergyman driven crazy by the alien invasion, and Atomic Kitten's Liz McClarnon as his wife. Justin Hayward will sing his evergreen hit and a holographic Richard Burton returns as the journalist narrator.

Wayne and his father originally hoped to bring the musical to the stage though Wayne always nursed an ambition to turn it into an ani-

ated movie, a project which is still ongoing 30 years later.

"The technology did not exist to create the spectacular show we envisaged until the 21st Century and even in the five years since our first arenas tour in 2005 it has grown to more than the first three tours combined," he told The Chronicle.

"We are now up to nine large trucks and War of the Worlds is a 24 hour enterprise during a tour."

"We have an amazing crew. If people look over their shoulder as they leave the arena they will see the crew starting to take the set down ready for the next show . . . some of them even grab some sleep in hammocks under the stage during the

two-and-a-quarter hour performance."

"This time we have new CGI animation on the 100ft wide, 25ft high screen, and the effects certainly have a wow factor. A Martian fighting machine lands on stage, it's 35ft tall and weighs three tonnes."

"It scans the audience and audience members will see themselves from the Martians' perspective and it fires a heat ray but we promise not to incinerate the first three rows."

He thinks that it is important to keep the novel's original 1890s setting. "The movie versions have interpreted the story by bringing it up to date but I think the Victorian setting is an important element, in-

that mankind with just rifles and cannon has no chance to defend itself against a superior alien force."

"Wells was a young author when he wrote the story and it was an episodic adventure for a magazine."

"But with its reference to tentacles and invasion it was also Wells taking a pop at the expanding British empire and in bringing up such subjects as the effects on faith, it has a message that still resonates in the real world."

Tickets are priced at £60 and £42.50, subject to booking fee. Book by calling The Ticket Factory on 0844 338 8000 or online at theticketfactory.com.

Don't Stop Believin', Grand Wolverhampton

An explosion of energy on stage, this is both a tribute to hit American TV show Glee and a joyous celebration of good pop music.

The singers and dancers each have a look easy to associate with characters in the musical series about a high school's competitive singing club but they don't pretend to be those characters and keep

their regional British accents rather than faking an American drawl. In fact, Don't Stop Believin' dispenses with plot altogether, being instead an all-singing all-dancing concert of songs featured in Glee and a few classic numbers that should be.

Backed by a live five-piece band, the tireless team of 12 performers are well over high school age and have voices of variable standards but they

give 100 per cent. Their boundless energy and enthusiasm more than makes up for a few clichés and clunky gear changes. Highlights include Naomi Miller's storming And I Am Telling You, Aveta Chen's Beautiful and Wolverhampton's Jonathan 'Jonty' Dudley making his pro debut and having fun with a version of Beyoncé's Single Ladies. The show continues until Saturday.
LEON BURAKOWSKI

The Magic of the Beatles, Alexandra Theatre

"It's just like being back at the Cavern," said one excited 50-something fan at the interval for Magic of the Beatles last Saturday night. The audience was a mixture of young and not-so-young but all could sing along to virtually every song. The band went through The Beatles' three main phases: The Mop Tops, Sergeant Pepper and then the period after Yoko arrived. "John" was the one who looked most like the Beatle he appeared as but had the weakest voice – which was a shame as his sound was so important to the group. He was fine har-

REVIEWS

monising on songs such as This Boy but if he sang the lead, his voice was not strong enough to hold the notes. His guitar playing went some way to make up. "Paul" was a great soundalike for McCartney and "Ringo" was excellent, laying down a solid backbeat on the drums. Unfortunately, when he sang Yellow Submarine and With A Little Help From My Friends, he sounded a bit too much like Ringo! "George" performed well vocally and on lead guitar. Here Comes The Sun left a nice, warm feeling.

SUE ATTWATER

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- Full-day visit to the Grand Canyon
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- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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the pulse



The Martians have landed . . . Modern technology has caught up with Jeff Wayne's stage concept of HG Wells' War of the Worlds

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Film Times for Friday 26th November to Thursday 2nd December 2010

HARRY POTTER - THE DEATHLY HALLOWS - PART 1 (12A)		DISPICABLE ME (U)	
Fri & Mon to Thurs	5.10 8.15	Fri & Mon - Thurs	4.00
Sat & Sun	11.00 2.05 5.10 8.15	Sat & Sun	11.50 2.00 4.00
MEGAMIND (PG)		UNSTOPPABLE (12A)	
Fri & Mon - Thurs	4.10 6.30 8.50	Fri & Mon - Thurs	4.10 6.30 8.50
Sat & Sun	10.45 12.45 2.45 4.45 6.45	Sat & Sun	1.50 4.10 6.30 8.50
SKYLINE (15)		DAILY	
6.15 8.30			
DUE DATE (U)		KID'S CLUB - £1.00 PER TICKET	
Fri & Mon - Thurs	4.30 6.45 9.00	LEGEND OF THE GUARDIANS (PG)	
Sat & Sun	9.00	Sat & Sun 11.40	

OAP Club All Day Tuesdays - All Tickets £2.70
PROGRAMME SUBJECT TO CHANGE
FLS - FREE LIST SUSPENDED NO COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS ACCEPTED FOR THESE FILMS

Friday

[illegible]

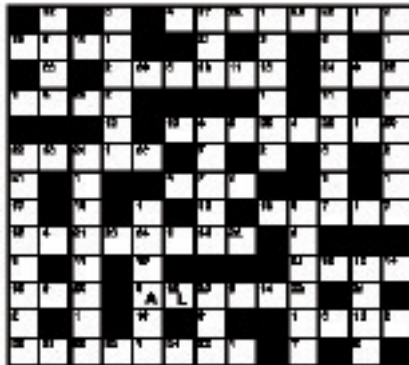
CRESCENT ROAD, KIDDERMINSTER

Brain Gym

No.092

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letters to fill in the grid. You will find your word.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION

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Y S Q K C E U N A P J Q B

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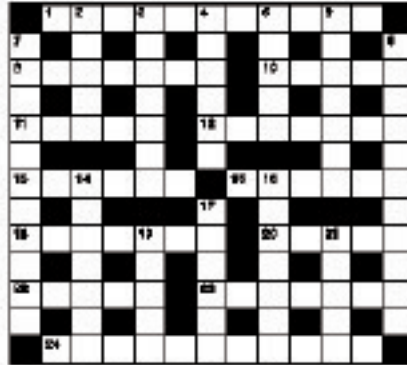
Double Crossword

Given either a clue or a grid, find the word.

Across

1. A person who is a member of the same family (4)
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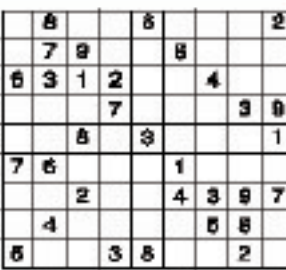
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24. A person who is a member of the same family (4)



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION
Across: 1. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Brother, 2. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Sister, 3. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Mother, 4. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Father, 5. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Grandmother, 6. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Grandfather, 7. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Aunt, 8. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Uncle, 9. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Cousin, 10. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Nephew, 11. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Niece, 12. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Son, 13. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Daughter, 14. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Brother-in-law, 15. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Sister-in-law, 16. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Mother-in-law, 17. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Father-in-law, 18. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Grandmother-in-law, 19. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Grandfather-in-law, 20. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Aunt-in-law, 21. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Uncle-in-law, 22. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Cousin-in-law, 23. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Nephew-in-law, 24. A person who is a member of the same family (4) - Niece-in-law.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every row, column, and 3x3 box contains all the digits from 1 to 9.



IN SUPPORT OF HELP for HEROES

Help for Heroes is a charity that helps injured service personnel and their families.



Help for Heroes is a charity that helps injured service personnel and their families. It was founded by a former soldier who was injured in the Iraq conflict. The charity has a number of projects, including a helpline, a website, and a shop. It also has a number of fundraising events, including a charity run and a charity concert.

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Don't forget to fill in the details of your donation. If you are donating by cheque, please make it payable to Help for Heroes. If you are donating by credit card, please use the details below. If you are donating by cash, please use the details below.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Donation amount: £ _____
Frequency: _____
Start date: _____

Signature: _____
Date: _____

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Even though the elves are sad that they have lost Santa by the time the youngsters board the aircraft everyone will be excited to play hide and seek in the sky.

As the aircraft climbs into the sky the elves will be busy looking for Santa with the children's help.

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How Rumer became fact

The latest singer-songwriter sensation Rumer tells LEON BURAKOWSKI of her 10-year struggle for overnight success

JUST a couple of years ago Sarah Joyce was waiting on tables and washing dishes. Now under her stage name Rumer, she sang for Elton John, guested for Jools Holland and has hit the top five with her debut album, *Seasons Of My Soul*.

Her mellow voice has been compared with Karen Carpenter and the great songwriter Burt Bacharach is among her biggest fans. Even former Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott has Twittered about his love for her lush ballad *Slow*.

In the past few weeks she has appeared as Elton John's special guest on his BBC Radio 2 Electric Prom with Leon Russell and has been touring big venues with Jools Holland and his band.

But Rumer's apparent overnight success has come after 10 years of struggling to make it in the music business. That struggle was partly due to record companies not prepared to take a chance on anything other than the latest fad, and probably also due to Rumer's insistence on creative control. Or as she puts it: "To keep the music pure."

"There are so many talented singer/songwriters out there who don't get a chance," the 31-year-old songstress said. "If the music business had been like this in the past we would have had no Kate Bush, no Peter Dinklage."

"I approached every record company before signing with Atlantic and many approached me. I



Rumer on the steps to success after years struggling to make it

remember one A&R (artist and repertoire) man said to me 'You're music is beautiful, it's spiritual, don't sign with us, we'll ruin it'.

"My mother used to tell me to go on The X Factor but I wouldn't do that. It is an entertaining programme but it is not about talent, it is about the event."

So music had to fit in with day jobs which included call centres and waitressing, including the experience of being slapped in the face by a drunken woman customer.

But things began to turn in her favour when she met television composer Steve Brown, best known as Alan Partridge's long-suffering band leader in

comedian Steve Coogan's *Knowing Me Knowing You*. His arrangements brought a fuller sound to songs that were created on acoustic guitar and in Atlantic they finally found a record company that would give Rumer her desired autonomy.

The Pakistan-born songstress, who chose a stage name in honour of children's author Rumer Godden, cannot praise the label enough and believes there is something in Atlantic's heritage that makes it prepared to place faith in an artist.

Its roster of famous names including many of the soul greats, including her idol Aretha Franklin (Aretha is the title of Rumer's latest single) and such bands as Led Zeppelin and Crosby Stills and Nash. In the past few weeks, she has toured with Jools Holland, appeared as special guest at Elton John and Leon Russell's Electric Prom on Radio 2, and her debut album has gone gold after earning rave reviews from the critics.

Next month she will be coming to Birmingham for a concert at the city's Glee Club (December 13) and it is a city she already knows a little about, her boyfriend being the nephew of Brum-born singer and songwriter Steve Winwood, formerly of The Spencer Davis Group.

She has also won the endorsement of one of the songwriting greats, Los Angeles-based Bacharach, who has allowed her to record *Some Lovers* (a new song from his proposed Christmas musical *The Gift of the Magi*) to be partnered with a live version of his 1960s classic *Alfie* for a double A-side single called *Rumer Sings Bacharach at Christmas*.

"If what has happened to me can open the door for others, I will be delighted," she said.

"This is a brand new dawn for me and I feel strangely comfortable, that I'm in context now."

Festive feast for lovers of music

PRESTIGIOUS Birmingham venue the Symphony Hall is planning a bumper festive celebration of the season. The deep and sonorous sound of the Russian Patriarchate Choir of Moscow will be heard performing Russian Orthodox Church music and folk songs by candlelight on Tuesday, December 7.

Choristers from Salisbury Cathedral will perform Christmas music at 1pm on Wednesday, December 8, and the Salvation Army will present its *Rejoice Christmas Carol Concert* on Sunday, December 12, at 2.30 and 6pm.

Choral outfit Only Men Aloud will perform their Christmas concert on December 13 and, by public demand, again on December 20.

Top 'popera' group Blake will be special guests when the Midlands Hospitals' Choir bring its Christmas Celebration to the city centre venue on Tuesday, December 14, at 3pm and again at 7.30pm.

The Christmas Festival will start on December 17 with Carols By Candlelight featuring the Mozart Festival Orchestra in full period costume, plus The Mozart Festival Chorus.

Adventurer Ben Fogle will be the host when the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra present festive favourites on December 18 (3 and 7.30), December 21 (7.30) and December 22 (3 and 7.30).

Rhydian Roberts will be Hayley Westenra's special guest when she teams up with the Raven String Quartet and Edgbaston High School for Girls' Junior Choir to the Christmas Wishes concert on Sunday, December 19. Composer Jonathan Cohen invites the audience to join in at the Christmas Carol Singalong, featuring guest singer Sophie-Louise Dann, the London Concert Orchestra and Chorus on December 23.

Christmas Eve Classics aims to capture the essence of a traditional Christmas and will feature the London Concert Orchestra, Birmingham Choral Union and Lichfield Cathedral Girls' Choir. Last Night of the Christmas Proms, including the Nutcracker.

Suite and a rousing British finale, will help classics fans work off the turkey with some patriotic fervour on December 27.

Mozart Festival Orchestra return in period costume for The Four Seasons by Candlelight on December 28 at 3pm. Veteran DJ Paul Gambaccini will introduce the London Concert Orchestra's performance of movie music by John Williams on December 28 evening. I'd Do Anything runner-up, young Irish jazz singer Jessie Buckley will be the London Concert Orchestra's guest for The Sound of the Musi-



Jazz singer Jessie Buckley

cals on December 29. Beethoven's Ninth will be performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and City of Birmingham Choir on December 30.

The London Concert Orchestra will welcome 2011 with a New Year's Eve Gala at 3 and 9.30pm and then folk can wait their way into the new year with a Johann Strauss Gala with the Johann Strauss Orchestra and Dancers at 3pm on New Year's Day. The evening will see Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*.

Bandleader Ray McVay will bring the season to a swinging end on January 2 with the Glenn Miller Orchestra, featuring The Uptown Hall Gang, The Moonlight Serenaders and special guests Jiving Lindy Hoppers.

From Lark Rise to Candleford, via the Grand

FOLLOWING the success of the award-winning BBC television series, a revival of Keith Dewhurst's original stage adaptation of *Lark Rise to Candleford*, is at the Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, from Monday until Saturday, December 4.

It follows a day in the life and relationships of the farm workers, craftsmen and gentry of the fictional hamlet of Lark Rise at the end of the 19th Century. It is the first day of harvest and villagers celebrate with the simple pleasures of music, song and dance, creating an evocative picture of a lost England. Based on the first book of Flora Thompson's trilogy of novels, this heart-warming play was first performed at

London's National Theatre in 1978 and nominated for two Olivier awards.

The company of 13 actors and two musicians include Sara Crowe, who played the 'first' bride in classic British rom-com movie *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, Eric Richard, who was Sergeant Bob Crier in *The Bill* for 20 years, and former G4 singer Jonathan Ansell, who was seen at the Grand earlier this year in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Whistle Down The Wind*.

Music is by folk icon Ashley Hutchings, of Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span and The Albion Band, who created the music for the original National Theatre production.

Glee fans have until Saturday to

catch the unofficial homage to the US TV show's remix of songs, *Don't Stop Believin'*, at the Grand.

Birmingham Repertory Theatre will be bringing the childhood favourite, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, to the stage this Christmas, from tonight (Thursday) to January 8. It is the last major production before the Rep closes for construction work. At its studio theatre *The Door* on Saturday (at 11.30am and 1.30pm) Lynggo Theatre present *Watch The Birdy*, a play for younger children and their families.

One-nighters at Birmingham's Alexandra Theatre continue with comedian Chris Addison, from *Lab Rats*, in stand-up action tomorrow night

(Friday); Asian stand-up comedy comes to the Alex on Saturday with Desi Central featuring Javier Jarquin, Hyde Panesar and American comic Dan Nainan; former Soft Cell singer Marc Almond is in concert on Sunday; The Chuckle Brothers get in the mood for festive fun in *The 12 Days of Christmas* on Tuesday; and Irish good time band *The Saw Doctors* are in concert on Wednesday, December 1.

Dance highlights include Birmingham Royal Ballet's *Cinderella* at the Hippodrome until December 12 and a contemporary triple bill from Stopgap Dance Company at Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre for one night only tomorrow night (Friday).

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Don't forget our car boot sale on 28th November

Late Night Shopping begins

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See local stores for details

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11th & 18th December

Events start from 11 am-4 pm

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12th December 4 pm

Kemp Hospice Light Up a Life Service

Breakfast with Santa

19th December

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The Swan Centre Car Park has hidden depths it seems with more available than meets the eye! It is the largest Private Car Park in The Wyre Forest, the fact that it's undercover makes it perfect all year round, combined with the disabled and child friendly spaces makes it the perfect choice for your hassle free Town Centre Shopping experience.

With a capacity of over 400 cars it means that you can always get a Town Centre parking spot, something which other Towns are finding it more difficult to provide.

There is direct access to the Swan Centre through the Car Park, and it's still undercover, so even a bit of bad weather shouldn't deter shoppers!



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1 HOUR55p
2 HOURS85p
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3 MONTHS£100
6 MONTHS£150
1 YEAR£275



Despite the economic downturn, Kymco has improved its UK scooter sales

Downtown bike booster

KYMCO may not be a name that you're instantly familiar with but visit any European holiday resort or city and you'll see their scooters everywhere.

Bike hire shops rent them out to tourists and the locals use them as everyday transport so you can be sure they're built to last.

As usual the UK public's emphasis on brand names having to fit an image means we've been slow on the uptake but Kymco was the joint highest selling scooter in the moped category in September and sales across the range have improved year on year.

Not bad at a time when bike and scooter sales are at an all-time low, writes Ian Granger.

The Kymco Downtown 300i is the latest addition to the Kymco stable and it's a very competent machine.

The first thing you notice with the Downtown is its physical size, it looks like a larger capacity maxi scooter and could easily pass as one.

Presence

The size helps to give it a good presence on the road and earns it a bit of respect from other road users.

Having said that, though, the sheer size of it isn't a handicap and once you start to use it that bulk disappears and it's certainly no heavyweight.

The Downtown is a good-looking machine from any angle. It's also built very well and everything on it looks to be

of good quality. All the plastics look and feel strong, they fit well, line up properly and don't rattle about.

Couple that with large and powerful twin halogen headlights complete with LED side lights, an attractive and useful front screen, digital instruments, plus a sumptuous seat with rider's back support and room for two lids beneath it, a very comfortable pillion seat with grab rail, a lockable glovebox behind the legshields (with charge point inside) and you're well on the way to having a useful mid-capacity scooter.

The engine is a class-leading 299cc, automatic, liquid cooled, fuel injected, four valve OHC with twin balancer shafts to reduce vibration.

The engine produces more

power and torque than anything else in the 250/300cc class, so expect to see 90mph on the clock. The extra power provided by that powerful engine would really come in useful on a long journey, as would the comfortable seat and riding position.

The Downtown is marketed as a sports tourer and they've got that description bang on. It has very good handling characteristics and superb brakes so you can have some fun on it around town or cover a few hundred miles in total comfort, either on your own or two up.

The Downtown lives up to its name and can handle stop/start slow speed traffic with perfect manners and balance but it's just as willing to have some fun when you leave town behind.

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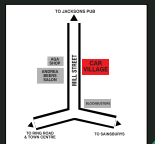
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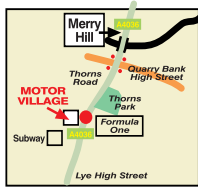
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-  **Buy** gift wrap cards, crackers and Christmas decorations making the most of local 3 for 2 offers.
-  **Write** your Christmas cards and buy stamps – save money by being organised and posting your cards early using second class stamps.
-  **If** you do your grocery shopping on-line many supermarkets will now let you book your delivery slot for the Christmas period. If you can do this it's a great idea to do it now as all the delivery slots will get booked up quickly.
-  **Fix** the menu you will be offering on Christmas Day or whenever you are entertaining.
-  **Order** the food you need for your menu
-  **Work** out your wardrobe for the events you will be attending over Christmas – glitz up an outfit from last year with this seasons statement jewellery
-  **Don't** forget Stir-up Sunday on November 29th. This is the perfect day to make your Christmas puddings and Christmas Cake.
-  **Stock** up on sticky tape for all the parcels you've got to do up this Christmas
-  **Don't** leave it until the last minute to check your Christmas tree lights and baubles - if there's a problem with any of these you may as well find out now so you can choose what you really like in the stores rather than having to shop for replacements from whatever they have left at the last minute.
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sport

Super solo try by Martin, but it's dour fare

IT MIGHT not have been pretty, but it was vital.

Kidderminster Carolians, heavily reliant on the boot of Andy McLellan, beat the side immediately below them and moved within sight of mid-table, writes **Martin Easton**.

Inside the first five minutes the visitors were

Kidderminster Carolians 23 Berkswell & Balsall 8

caught offside and McLellan punished them with a 30-metre penalty but from the re-start KC's lost possession and Berkswell scored in the corner.

McLellan then missed a close-range penalty but KCs were able to camp in

at the turn. Another drop goal saw Berkswell reply with a penalty to trail 12-8 in a dour second half.

McLellan added another drop and penalty and right on the final whistle centre Nick Martin sidestepped a marker in his own 22, spun out of another despairing tackle and then outpaced

the last defender for an outstanding individual try to illuminate the game.

K'minster 38 Tamworth 5

There were two tries each for Dan Cooper, Joe Carey Jenkins and Miles Perry with three conversions by David Bisset and one by Mitch Dywys in the under-15s' fine victory.

Black belt fighters making the grade

FIVE hours of gruelling work went into Tae Kwon Do Schools of Excellence/BCKMA Organisation black belt grading at the Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre, Kidderminster.

Taking their first degree black belts were Charlotte Shaw, Georgia Shaw, Stan Smith, Jaime Cook, Emily Robinson, Daniel Barnes, Richard Giles, Mitch Collis, Paula Martin, Sam Jennings and Andrea Payne.

Second degree candidates Alan Carter, Ben Hobson and Ian Sturzaker. Going for their third degree promotions were Colin Robinson, Ryan Cotterill, Fletcher Thomas, Millie Thomas and Sam Meese.

And Val Wilkinson, Sytchampton Tae Kwon Do instructor was tackling her fourth degree.

Tae Kwon Do Schools of Excellence



Black belt candidates at the recent grading event which took place at the Wyre Forest Glades Centre in Kidderminster

had a total of 20 students grading on the same day, travelling from Bewdley, Sytchampton and Worcester as well as the home contingent from Kidderminster.

Several masters in attendance were impressed by the standards. Colin Robinson, Ryan Cotterill, Fletcher

Thomas, Millie Thomas, Daniel Barnes and Val Wilkinson all achieved the highest result possible, an A pass merit.

Grading work included patterns, self-defence, sparring drills, freestyle fighting techniques, knife disarms and a crowd-pleasing destruction section

with more than 110 wooden boards broken. Prior to the grading the theoretical element was taken, involving a test paper on technical and historical aspects of the art, development and practice.

Tae Kwon Do Schools of Excellence clubs now have a total of 70 black belts

with clubs ranging from Kidderminster to Devon.

TKDSOE is hosting a seminar in screen fighting, flips and tricks with 13 times world champion and movie stunt fighter "Zara Phythian" on Saturday, February 26 in Bewdley. Contact 01562 636005 for more information.

Tae Kwon Do Schools of Excellence is a member of the British Council for Korean Martial Arts and the International Sung Ja-Do Association. Any students or instructors looking for a change in the way they train or teach can contact the organisation on 01562 636005 or 07977 245664.

BURR BEAMING AT SKILFUL SIDE

Kidderminster Harriers 2 Eastbourne 1

HARRIERS put themselves just goal difference away from a play-off place after stretching their unbeaten Blue Square Bet Premier run to seven matches on Saturday.

Kidderminster have now won six and drawn two of their last eight home league games and have not lost in the league at Aggborough for three months.

Malhotra birthday joy – but Walker suffers

SARAJEVO'S Olympic Stadium, where Torvill and Dean took the Olympic ice dance gold medal in 1984, was the setting for the European Under-23 judo championships last weekend where injured Samurai fighter Kate Walker finished ninth.

It was a slip back from her two previous finishes of seventh, but Walker is yet to retain full fitness following a lengthy shoulder injury.

She started well in the women's under-63 kilos group, but was eventually eliminated by the Austrian number one Marie Priesner. The two have had a few battles with honours generally about

even, but on this occasion Walker attacked with a throw which took both players to the mat and then found herself on the wrong end of a groundhold.

Great Britain head coach Patrick Roux said: "It was too soon after her return from injury for Kate to be back at her best. However, it was still worth doing this event for the feedback and experience."

Meanwhile, Ian Malhotra has become the latest Samurai player to gain his black belt. Malhotra, who started judo just four years ago, has won a number of medals as well as distinguishing himself on the annual club trip to the Alicante international training camp for the last three years.

He aimed for the black belt before his 19th birthday and got there with two weeks to spare.

More Samurai information: Call 0776 1122977 or visit the club website on www.samurai.org.uk

Boss Steve Burr described an entertaining clash as "a really good advert for the league" and praised his players.

He said: "Eastbourne are probably one of the better teams we've played and some of our football was excellent. I thought in the first half we had some fantastic chances to increase our lead."

"But 2-1, at the end of the day, is three points and we're really pleased with how we've played."

"I thought some of our build-up play was really good, as good as it's been since I've been here."

Kidderminster were full value for their 1-0 lead at the break, provided by a ninth-minute shot on the turn from Lee Morris following fine build-up involving Mike Williams.

Borough front-runner Jamie Taylor went close on a couple of occasions before Harriers made it 2-0 in the 67th minute.

A fine run by man-of-the-match Dave Hankin saw him go past three players before slipping the ball to Lee Vaughan who set up the chance for Marc Williams to end his loan from Wrexham with a goal.

Eastbourne pulled a goal back on 71 minutes when Richard Pacquette headed in a corner.

It's Henry and Anna, to a tee



Top shots: Henry James and Anna Rock were the club champions

KIDDERMINSTER Golf Club celebrated its year with a presentation evening featuring 80-plus trophies.

Youngest recipient was Bertie Franklin, aged 12, who won two trophies. Bill Sutton, one of the club's senior players, also won two trophies

while Will and Claire Painter won the mixed knockout.

Bob Cummings won the seniors match play knockout

Henry James and Anna Rock won the men's club championship and the ladies' club championship respectively.

Jade's a gem as Stourport battle back

North Notts 2 Stourport 4

STOURPORT ladies' firsts bounced back to win from 2-1 down and retain top spot in the Midland First Division. Confusion in the visitors' defence saw them two down before Jade Marshall Walker converted a short corner.

In the second half they equalised with a fine shot from Pippa Lewis and took the lead when Irene Johnson rounded the keeper and slotted home.

Johnson then turned provider, beating four players before setting up Erin Preece for the fourth.

Birmingham University 4 Stourport 2

Just like the firsts, the seconds fell two goals behind but there was no happy ending in the Midland Feeder West match.

Stourport picked up the pace in the second half with Holly Lashford converting a short corner and Lauren Homer putting the teams level. But a goal from a controversial short corner followed by a fourth from open play won it for the students.

Worcester 2 Stourport 2

Stourport thirds led, trailed and then equalised in this Worcestershire First Division contest.

Fran Moss converted a penalty corner to open the scoring but a disputed goal put Worcester level.

The home side went in front in the second half but another Moss penalty corner earned a draw.

Stourport 2 Kings Heath 1

Rosie Connolly's second-half strike settled a cagey Midland First match in favour of Stourport fourths.

They went ahead when good passing found Teresa Moss who slotted the ball past the keeper.

Kings Heath levelled but Connolly then whipped in a fierce shot which proved the winner.

Ludlow 8 Stourport 0

Ludlow firsts lie second in the Worcestershire Third Division. And it was this difference in league positions which was reflected in the final scoreline, despite the visitors trailing only 1-0 at the break.

Town shuffle pack

Wednesday 4 Bewdley Town 1

BEWDLEY, with numerous players unavailable, shuffled the pack. They were two down at the turn and conceded a second-half brace as attacks left them vulnerable to the counter. Five minutes from time Steve Holt scored a consolation and was then red-carded for a reckless challenge born of frustration. Bewdley host Lye Town on Saturday (3pm).

Domino's Pizza

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MEGA DEALS

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